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ABSTRACT

A study examined similarities and differences between the reactions of Baby Boomers (age 29 to 47) and members of Generation X (age 17 to 28) to 35 objectionable magazine advertisements. In an earlier study, 29 students in an advertising campaigns course ranked the objectionable advertisements (identified by students in an introductory course) by means of a Q-sort followed by personal interviews. A convenience sample of 27 Baby Boomers (consisting mainly of business people and homemakers) was drawn from residents of central Indiana and Chicago, Illinois. The advertisements, of which the majority featured nudity and explicit sexual suggestiveness, were tested using a Q-sort, followed by a personal interview, to determine respondents' rankings of the advertisements and their reasoning. Two factors emerged from the sorts of the 27 Boomer respondents: "Thirtysomethings" (most of whom were in their 30s) and "Fortysomethings" (most of whom were in their 40s). Sorts of the earlier study indicated that two factors emerged for the students: "Feminists" and "Chauvinists." Comparison of results from both studies indicated that: (1) all factors but the Fortysomethings objected most to a series of three advertisements which graphically portrayed sexual encounters; (2) Thirtysomethings and Feminists felt that advertising which demeans women should be a thing of the past; (3) the Fortysomethings and Chauvinists strongly objected to advertising dealing with political and social issues; and (4) in interviews, both Boomers and Generation Xers explained their reasons for their Q-sorts in similar terms. (Contains 11 references, 26 notes, and four tables of data. An appendix of data is attached.) (RS)

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ED 375 447

OBJECTIONABLE ADVERTISING: A Q-sort comparing the perceptions of Baby Boomers and Generation X.

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ABSTRACT

In 1993, thirty-five magazine advertisements were tested among members of Generation X to determine what they considered objectionable in advertising and why. The authors replicated this study among Baby Boomers to determine whether there are any similarities and/or differences between these two generations. The advertisements, of which the majority featured nudity and explicit sexual suggestiveness, were tested by using a Q-sort, followed by a personal interview, to determine respondents' rankings of these advertisements and their reasoning.

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INTRODUCTION

Nearly 76 million babies were born in America between 1946 and 1964; the average per family peaking at 3.7 babies during this period. If one would add two million more due to immigration, this age group, known as the Baby Boomers, becomes the largest U.S. population group. A breakdown of the 1993 U.S. population by generation is as follows:

Generation	Age	Size	Percentage
Echo Boom	0-16	63.7m	25%
Baby Bust	17-28	44.2m	17%
Baby Boom	29-47	77.6m	30%
Silent	48-64	39.3m	15%
Senior Citizens	65+	32.8m	13%

Based on numbers, it should be clear that the Boomers would have a tremendous impact on American society. It started with swamping kindergartens in 1951 resulting in record school and university enrollments which later flooded the work force. When they entered the work force, "there were so many applicants, so many entry-level workers, all competing with one another, that the oversupply only served to drive down salaries and wages. And as Boomers climbed the corporate ladder, the steps seemed steeper, not only because of the inherent competitiveness of upper-management jobs, but also because of the sheer numbers of capable boomer applicants." [1]

Marketers had a field day wooing the Boomers with products such as hula hoops, blue jeans, 45-rpm records allowing this generation to leave its imprint on the economy. But, Boomers have also made their social mark. Woodstock, the Vietnam War, hippies, flower power, protests, are all characteristics of the Baby Boomer era.

In 1994 the Boomers are between 30 and 48 years old, the majority of them being middle-aged. Not surprisingly, marketers, blinded by numbers, "age right along

with the Boomers. As a result, growth industries include opticians, skin and hair care, health and fitness, recreation, home remodeling, financial planning, and nostalgia."[2]

Although the Baby Boomers may be the "numbers generation," they were also responsible for having considerably fewer children than their parents did. The reasons for this are attributed to factors such as liberalized divorce laws, birth control, education, social change, abortion on demand and the seesaw economy.

It appears that few marketers are paying attention to the much smaller next generation, comprised of 18 to 29 year olds, normally referred to as Generation X (or Busters). Karen Ritchie, McCann-Erickson, Worldwide, warned the media in 1992 that the Baby Boomers were getting old and if the media did not recognize the emergence of the "busters," they "risked alienating a group ready to overtake boomers as the primary market for nearly every product category."[3]

Generation X may be a smaller group (44 million) than the Boomers, but "their annual spending power is already estimated at $125 billion. More than half are still living with their parents, leaving them with more disposable income and less entrenched brand loyalties."[4]

Many media are trying to straddle both worlds by relying on demographics such as the 18 - 34 age group which encompasses both boomers and Generation X. There are, however, signs that some media are leaning toward the younger generation as the Boomers are getting older. "Beverly Hills, 90210," "Melrose Place," "The Heights," "Class of '96," and "The Round Table" are examples of how some of the media are now wooing this segment.

While little is known about this group, a stereotypical portrait of Generation X is emerging: media savvy, but they feel alienated from the mainstream culture that has ignored them. "They resent the boomers for a variety of real and perceived evils, from hogging the best jobs to spoiling the environment. The problem with this particular generation is that they've gotten the short end of the stick for a long time

so they're understandably a little hostile. They're not sharing in the American dream. They're in back of this enormous generation so they're by definition going to get hand-me-downs."[5] "What Boomers should blush over," according to Elissa Moses, senior vice president, D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles, "are the many misguided marketing campaigns devised to reach X'ers. That happens because Boomers, despite knowing what makes X'ers different, can't seem to reach them."[6]

Mitchell Fox, publisher of Conde Nast Publications' *Details*, has a skeptical outlook on what the media community's response to discovering this valuable consumer market will be. "I fear publishers and broadcasters will create media that are marketing-driven to capture advertising dollars rather than those that are reader- or viewer-driven."[7] Interestingly, Scott Donaton, claims that those who have studied Generation X believe that a low-key approach works best to reach them and he continues to cite successful youth-oriented campaigns from such marketers as Revlon, Calvin Klein Inc., The Gap and Burger King Corp.

In 1993, Yssel, Gustafson, Popovich and Woodley tested 35 student-selected advertisements among members of Generation X to determine whether they objected to the advertisements or not. The authors decided to replicate this study among Baby Boomers and then to analyze similarities and/or differences between the two generations.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The purpose of brand advertising is to sell, but in order for an advertisement to sell, it first has to be noticed. It would appear that many advertisers will go to any lengths to have their advertising noticed. In the search for the most effective way to advertise, more and more advertisers are reaching into an area which could be classified as "shock" advertising.

In 1980 Calvin Klein caused an outcry with his two jeans commercials, *The*

Feminist (featuring Brooke Shields where "nothing comes between me and my Calvins") and *The Teenager* ("If my jeans could talk, I'd be ruined"). These commercials were banned by some television stations, a decision forced by "viewers decrying the commercials."[8] Not perturbed, Mr. Klein said that "jeans are about sssexx"[9] and would continue along these lines to sell his products in the years to come. In hindsight, one can say that these Calvin Klein commercials are tame compared to what the public is subjected today. Visuals have indeed become so explicit that they border on pornography. This concurs with Soley and Kurzbard's[10] findings that sexual illustrations have become much more overt over a 20-year period.

Barnes and Dotson[11] reported that a person's perception of "offensiveness" in television commercials is a function of the product itself and the execution of the commercial. They pointed out that while consumers may understand that it may be more difficult to make advertisements non-offensive for some types of products, they might not agree with the advertiser's solution.

Nudity in advertising is nothing new. Visuals depicting partial or total nudity have been employed for a long time to gain product and brand attention, recall and sales. Steadman[12] undertook a study to determine how sexy illustrations affected brand recall. Alexander and Judd[13] replicated this study and concluded that nudity in advertising did not enhance brand recall; in fact, they found that advertisements with forests and mountains received higher recall scores. This concurs with Steadman's[14] research which concluded that nonsexual illustrations were more effective than sexual ones in achieving brand recall. Attitudes toward nudity in advertising have been found to vary by different groups of people. Alexander and Judd[15] further found:

- more negative attitudes were evident among females in general and females from small towns who read more magazines and watch more television
- younger males and males who attend church frequently held more negative attitudes

Soley and Kurzbard[16] discovered that:

- although the percentage of ads with sexual content remained constant, the absolute number of ads has increased in the average issue of the studied magazines during the twenty-year time interval
- general-interest magazines have shown a marked increase in sexually oriented ads but women's and men's magazines have not
- sexual illustrations have become more overt
- sexual elements, when present, tend to be more likely visual than verbal – this is a tendency which has increased over time
- female models are more likely to be portrayed as suggestively clad, partially clad, or nude than male models

Judd and Alexander[17] stated that sexual appeals in advertisements may be unbelievable and destroy the logical unity of the advertisement. Judd and Alexander[18] reported that the use of indiscriminate sexual themes can sometimes reduce a product's appeal, depending on the product's appropriateness or match with the suggested themes. Richmond and Hartman[19] found that a judicious use of sex appeal can produce satisfactory results. "Functional," "fantasy" and "symbolic" use of sexual appeal may have a legitimate and non-offensive role for some products. Now, it may be accepted in some advertising circles that "sex sells," but where does one draw the line?

Severn, et al.,[20] examined the communication effectiveness of visually explicit sexual stimuli and reported that:

- given the nature of a very explicit sexual portrayal, it would seem that more attention would be given to the ad execution than to the message content ... thus drawing cognitive processing away from the evaluation of the product and/or the message
- the ability to recall a brand name appeared to be more a function of the information level of the ad than of its sexual explicitness

From the research review, it seems advertisers should use caution in selecting sexual themes for their brands' advertising campaigns. There appears to be

limitations to their appropriateness and effectiveness; so, there are risks.

Based on the available research and the authors' sentiments toward the implications of identifying and understanding what could be perceived as objectionable advertising, the following research questions were posed. How does the Baby Boom generation compare to Generation X when it comes to:

1 Which contemporary magazine advertising executions are found to be the most objectionable, and why?

2 What kinds of executions or products are selected most often?

METHOD

In 1993, Yssel [21] et al., tested 35 advertisements among members of Generation X in order to determine what they considered to be objectionable advertising. One of the authors of the 1993 study requested the students from his introductory advertising course to bring to class those ads, for whatever reason, which they objected to. Thirty-five ads were selected from this pool and a Q-sort was administered among 29 students from the capstone course, Advertising Campaigns. Subjects were asked to rank each of the ads by means of a Q-sort on a 9-point scale from "most objectionable" to "least objectionable." The Q-sort was immediately followed by a personal interview to better understand the respondents' reasoning behind their rankings. The process of Q-sort and interview took one hour per respondent to complete. These findings were reported at the 1993 Kansas City convention of AEJMC. For the present study, the authors took the identical advertisements which were used during the previous Generation X study and asked members from the Baby Boomer generation to rank these in order to determine what similarities and differences existed between these two generations. Q-sort is a behavioral research technique which was introduced by William Stephenson.[22] This technique allows the investigator systematically to study subjectivity. While each Q-sort reflects each subject's own point-of-view regarding objectionable advertising,

Q-sort rankings are subsequently subjected to factor analysis which provides clusters of perceptions concerning the subject. Investigators are most interested in the clusters of patterns of behavior which arise from the sorts, because those patterns present perspectives that are internal in nature, i.e., from a subject's standpoint. By contrast, R-factor analysis provides perspectives which are external in nature, i.e. from an observer's standpoint. And since Q-methodology does not require large numbers of subjects, investigators are content to talk about typical patterns, or models, of behavior found among Baby Boomers rather than with what might be considered the average Baby Boomer's opinion concerning objectionable ads. In dealing with subjectivity, there are no right or wrong answers, "since there is no outside criteria for a person's own point of view."[23]

The investigators conducted personal interviews after the sorts were recorded. This methodology became similar to that of focus group research which is widely applied by the advertising industry. Although focus group research may not be representative of a population, it is indeed directional and found to be a very successful research tool. What makes QMETHOD more effective than focus groups, in the opinion of the researchers, is the fact that they can quantify subjectivity with QMETHOD. Focus group investigators must, instead, rely on experience and a priori reasonings for their interpretations.

Responses were computer tabulated at the authors' university using the QMETHOD factor analysis program.[24] One of the benefits of the QMETHOD program is its flexibility which allows investigators, if they wish, to compare and contrast hand rotated factors with computer generated factors. In order to determine if factors should be retained in the solution, at least two of the factor loadings, or person correlations, on each factor must be significant at the .01 level. Factor loadings in this study were considered significant if they exceeded .501. This significant correlation was determined by a procedure using the standard error of a

zero-order loading, which is explained in Brown.[25]

QMETHOD also provided a descending array of advertisements and normalized z-scores on significant factors for all 35 advertisements. Scores above and below a z-score criterion of 1.0 for each factor were considered significant (see Appendix A for a two-factor summary of z-scores for all 35 advertisements.)

Because a strong correlation was found between the two factors generated for this study, investigators employed another technique explained in Brown[26] which would highlight significant differences in advertisements between each factor array. Since QMETHOD averages the Q-Sort values provided by the subjects for each advertisement initially, those advertisements which varied between each factor array of advertisements by a score of three or more were also used to distinguish one factor from the other.

Once each of the factors was determined, the investigators inspected the demographics for the subjects who comprised each factor type to determine if demographic characteristics could provide more information about persons loading on each factor.

FINDINGS

BABY BOOMERS: A convenience sample of 27 Baby Boomers was drawn from residents of central Indiana and Chicago. The sample consisted primarily of business people and homemakers (advertising practitioners and college professors were excluded) and were comprised of 14 males and 13 females whose ages ranged from 30 to 47 years. Thirteen were affiliated with the Republican party compared to the four Democrats (10 indicated no political preference). Six reported to be Catholic while the others' denominations varied; three showed no particular preference.

After the Q sorts had been tabulated and submitted for analysis, two factors emerged from the sorts of 27 Boomer respondents. For the first factor (Factor I), 11

subjects sorted the advertisements in similar manner. On the second factor (Factor II) 16 subjects sorted in similar fashion. The correlation between the two factors was .397 and the both factors accounted for 44% percent of the total variance in the correlation matrix.

As a method of identifying these two factors, two labels were created by the authors which seemed appropriate for each factor based on the demographics which were associated with each factor. Factor I subjects were labeled "Thirtysomethings," (the majority were in their thirties) while Factor II subjects were labeled "Fortysomethings" (the majority were in their forties).

FACTOR I (Thirtysomethings). Respondents on this factor objected most to advertisements featuring sexual explicitness and degrading women. These executions were part of three advertising campaigns carried in the sort ranked by respondents: Wilke Rodriguez and Calvin Klein (sexual explicitness) and Adam's Boots (degrading women). Five males and six females provided the highest factor loadings on this factor.

TABLE 1: Factor I Objectionable Ads with Significant Z-scores

No	Advertisement	Z-scores
14	Wilke-Rodriguez – man's face in woman's crotch, breast partly exposed	1.990
7	Calvin Klein –Marky Mark in underwear grabbing crotch	1.887*
16	Wilke-Rodriguez – couple on roof top simulating intercourse	1.453
17	Adam's Boots – woman in tank top on knees licking shiny floor	1.390
21	Wilke-Rodriguez – couple on roof top in heavy necking situation intertwined	1.347
18	Adam's Boots – woman in T-shirt on knees licking shiny floor	1.130
3	Calvin Klein – woman on top of man on beach in bathing suits	-1.021
28	Camel Lights – Joe Camel in tux offering cigarettes	-1.054
35	K-Y Jelly – silhouette of naked woman	-1.073
30	Banana Republic – two men with hands around each other's neck/chest	-1.305*
29	Kool Cigarettes – model in jump suit standing with legs apart	-1.309
34	Gyne-Moistrin – classic painting of nude with back to painter	-1.834*
32	Trojan Condoms – male model on sail board	-1.884

*Advertisements significantly different after comparing factor value scores

Ads considered "most objectionable" by this group displayed men and women in sexually compromising and suggestive situations and positions demeaning to women. The ad for Calvin Klein underwear, featuring Marky Mark, received a significantly higher factor value score on this factor than on Factor II. It was rated +4 by Factor I respondents and +1 by Factor II respondents. Some of the respondents' comments as to why they objected to the above ads, follow:

- **"I don't like the ads because they exploit women."**
- **"The visuals are way too overt and shocking."**
- **"The submissive positioning of women is ridiculous."**
- **"Visuals are offensive and repugnant."**
- **"They treat women like dogs ... very demeaning."**

Factor I respondents found the following advertisements least objectionable: Calvin Klein (perfume), Camel Lights and Kool cigarettes, K Y Jelly, Banana Republic (featuring two men hugging each other) Gyne-moistrin and Trojan condoms. Five of these ads featured somewhat controversial products. Following are some of the respondents' comments for ranking these ads the way they did:

- **"It's all a matter of personal choice."**
- **"I'm not opposed to cigarette advertising."**
- **"Condom advertising promotes safe sex."**

FACTOR II ("Fortysomethings"). Sixteen respondents, predominantly in their forties, were associated with this factor, including seven females. These respondents objected most to those advertisements dealing with homosexuality and lesbianism, social issues and featuring sexual explicitness (see Table 2). These advertisements include Cafe Tabac (lesbianism), Benetton (social issues), Banana Republic (homosexuality) and Wilke-Rodriguez (sexual explicitness).

The two ads featuring sexual orientation were particularly bothersome to respondents who comprised this factor. Cafe Tabac, featuring two women kissing passionately, was rated a +4 by Factor II respondents, compared to a 0 by Factor I respondents. The same applies to Banana Republic (showing two men with their hands around each other's neck and chest) which was rated a +3 by Factor II

respondents while respondents of Factor I rated it a -3. The two Benetton ads dealing with social issues also received significantly higher factor value scores on this factor than on Factor I. The Benetton AIDS death bed ad was rated a +4 by respondents of Factor II compared to the -1 rating of Factor I respondents. The Benetton electric chair was rated +3 by Factor II respondents and -1 by Factor I respondents.

TABLE 2: Factor II Objectionable Ads with Significant Z-scores

No	Advertisement	Z-scores
31	Cafe Tabac – close-up of two women kissing passionately	1.694*
24	Benetton – family around death bed of AIDS patient resembling Christ	1.660*
19	Benetton – two-page spread with electric chair off-center	1.497*
30	Banana Republic – two men with hands around each other's neck/chest	1.398*
14	Wilke-Rodriguez – Man's face in woman's crotch, breast partly exposed	1.299
23	Gap – Black female wearing shorts with hands in crotch	-1.013
33	Integrated Conditioning – bodybuilder holding woman from behind	-1.109*
32	Trojan Condoms – male model on sail board	-1.493
28	Camel Lights – Joe Camel in tux offering cigarettes	-1.756
29	Kool Cigarettes – model in jump suit standing with legs apart	-1.990

*Advertisements significantly different after comparing factor value scores

The Fortysomethings offered the following comments about their rankings.

- **"I'm not sure where they're coming from or what they're selling."**
- **"I can't stand the exploitation of violence to sell a product."**
- **"What are they advertising when they show gays kissing and hugging?"**
- **"This is a sacrilegious portrayal of Christ."**
- **"I don't want my kids to see these."**

Only one advertisement rated least objectionable by Factor II was significantly different from Factor I respondents. Integrated Conditioning, featuring a bodybuilder, was rated -3 by Factor II respondents, compared to +1 by respondents from Factor I.

Ads which Factor II respondents objected to least, included: Gap, Integrated Conditioning, Trojan condoms, Camel Lights and Kool Cigarettes. These advertisements did not feature nudity, sexual explicitness, although one (Gap)

portrayed mild sexual suggestiveness. The respondents stated why they did not object to these:

- **"Cigarette advertising is OK as long as it's aimed at adults."**
- **"Condoms, birth control, safe sex all need more exposure."**
- **"As long as ads are done tastefully and are relevant to the product, they're not objectionable."**

In summary, while the thirtysomethings found ads which portrayed sexual explicitness and degrading women most objectionable, the fortysomethings were most offended by ads which portrayed homosexuality and lesbianism and those dealing with social issues, although they did object to one ad (Wilke-Rodriguez) which was extremely sexually suggestive.

GENERATION X: For this experiment, 29 senior advertising students were drawn from the capstone course, *Advertising Campaigns*. The sample was comprised of 17 males and 12 females whose grade point averages ranged from 2.2 - 3.7. Their ages ranged from 21 to 26 years. Fourteen said they were Republicans compared to the five Democrats and ten indicated no political preference. Fourteen students claimed to be Catholic while the others' denominations varied; three showed no particular preference.

Two factors emerged from the Q-sorts of the 29 students. For the first factor (Factor I), 15 subjects sorted the advertisements in similar manner. On the second factor (Factor II), 14 subjects sorted in similar fashion. The correlation between the two factors was .542 and the both factors accounted for 34.5 percent of the total variance in the correlation matrix.

As a method of identifying these factors, two labels were created which seemed appropriate for each factor based on the demographics. Factor I subjects were labeled "Chauvinists," while Factor II subjects were labeled "Feminists."

FACTOR I (Chauvinists) objected most to advertisements featuring sexual explicitness and social issues. These executions were part of two advertising

campaigns: Wilke Rodriguez (sexual explicitness) and Benetton (social issues). Twelve males and three females provided the highest factor loadings on this factor.

TABLE 1: Factor I Objectionable Ads with Significant Z-scores

No.	Advertisement	Z-scores
14	Wilke-Rodriguez--Man's face in woman's crotch, breast partly exposed	1.845
24	Benetton--Family gathered around death bed of AIDS patient resembling Christ	1.832*
19	Benetton--Two page spread with electric chair off-center	1.332*
16	Wilke-Rodriguez--Couple on roof top simulating intercourse	1.216
21	Wilke-Rodriguez--Couple on roof top in heavy necking situation intertwined	1.175
32	Trojan condoms--Male model on sail board	-1.345
33	Integrated Conditioning--Bodybuilder holding woman from behind	-1.412
28	Camel Lights--Joe Camel in tux offering cigarettes	-2.069
29	Kool Cigarettes--Model in jump suit standing with legs apart	-2.191

*Advertisements significantly different after comparing factor value scores

Ads considered "most objectionable" by this group displayed men and women in sexually compromising positions and graphically displayed scenes of death. One of the ads carried a lone picture of an electric chair, and another carried a death bed scene with the victim resembling the Christ figure (see Table 1). Each of these Benetton ads received significantly higher factor value scores on this factor than on Factor II. The Benetton death bed ad was rated a +4 by Factor I respondents, while Factor II respondents ranked it, -1. The Benetton electric chair ad was rated +3 by Factor I respondents, and -2 by Factor II respondents. Some of the Chauvinists' comments as to why they objected to the ads, are noted below:

- **"The Benetton ads are sacrilegious, disgusting, morbid"**
- **"Far too sexually explicit"**
- **"The Wilke Rodriguez ads are obscene and pornographic"**
- **"I wouldn't want my little kids to see these"**
- **"They're just doing it for shock value"**

Factor I respondents found the following advertisements least objectionable: Trojan condoms, Integrated Conditioning Programs (featuring a well-built male bodybuilder) and two cigarette ads, Camel and Kool. These ads did not

deal with specific issues, but featured somewhat controversial products. .Following are some students' comments for ranking these ads the way they did.

- **"Smoking is not offensive"**
- **"There's nothing objectionable about cigarette advertising"**
- **"Condoms have become a part of life, need to promote it"**
- **"Cigarette advertising is OK if it's directed at adults"**

FACTOR II (Feminists). Fourteen students, including nine females, were associated with this factor and they objected most to those advertisements degrading women and featuring sexual explicitness and gay women (see Table 2). These advertisements include Wilke Rodriguez (sexual explicitness), Cafe Tabac (lesbianism) and Adam's Boots (degrading women).

TABLE 2: Factor II Objectionable Ads with Significant Z-scores

No.	Advertisement	Z-scores
14	Wilke-Rodriguez--Man's face in woman's crotch, breast partly exposed	2.341
21	Wilke-Rodriguez--Couple on roof top intertwined, heavy necking situation	1.726
31	Cafe Tabac--Closeup of two women kissing passionately	1.558
16	Wilke-Rodriguez--Couple on roof top simulating intercourse	1.216
17	Adam's Boots--Woman in tank top on knees licking shiny floor	1.147*
18	Adam's Boots--Woman in T-shirt on knees licking floor	1.076*
3	Calvin Klein--Woman on top of man on beach in bathing suits	-1.039
29	Kool Cigarettes--Model in jump suit standing with legs apart	-1.223
26	Benetton--Burning car on street, double truck	-1.227*
23	Gap--Black female model wearing shorts with hands in crotch	-1.317
34	Gyne-Moistrin--Classic painting of nude with back to painter	-1.594
28	Camel Lights--Joe Camel in tux offering cigarettes	-1.668
32	Trojan Condoms--Male model on sail board	-1.937

*Advertisements significantly different after comparing factor value scores

The two ads degrading to women were particularly bothersome to students who comprised this factor. The boot ad with the woman in a tank top licking the floor was rated a +3 by Factor II respondents, but a -1 by Factor I respondents. The second boot ad with a woman in a T-shirt was rated +2 by Factor II respondents, and a -1 again by Factor I. Feminists offered the following comments about their rankings:

- **"Too sexually explicit, selling sex and could not tell the product"**
- **"Wilke Rodriguez ads are obscene"**
- **"There must be a better way to advertise than showing two lesbians"**
- **"Portray women as sex objects"**
- **"Exploitation of women"**

Only one advertisement rated least objectionable by Factor II was significantly different from Factor I respondents. Factor II respondents did not think that a burning car on a European street was offensive (-3), but Factor I respondents rated the same ad +1.

Ads which Factor II respondents objected to least included: Trojan condoms, Camel and Kool cigarettes, Calvin Klein cologne, Gap, Benetton and Gyne-moistrin. These advertisements did not feature nudity or sexual explicitness, although two of them portrayed mild sexual suggestiveness. Feminists stated why they did not object to these:

- **"It's good to show and sell condoms"**
- **"The cigarette advertising doesn't imply anything or try and shock"**
- **"Cigarette advertising is OK as they carry warnings"**

In summary, while respondents from both factors found the same three advertisements (Wilke-Rodriquez jeans) to be most objectionable, the predominantly male factor rejected two other ads which graphically represented death. The predominantly female factor strongly rejected ads that degraded women

CONCLUSION

This study's findings concur with a number of previous findings concerning the use of nudity and sexual appeals in advertising. It also expands upon the body of research available concerning objectionable and offensive advertising. In particular, it further expands upon the study (Yssel et al.) of objectionable advertising among members of Generation X by replicating and comparing it with the perceptions of Baby Boomers.

Previous research suggests that using nudity and sexual appeals involves risk

for advertisers. A number of studies concluded that nonsexual illustrations are more effective than sexual ones in achieving brand recall (Steadman; Alexander & Judd). Consumers may recall the "sexy" advertising execution but not the brand (Severn). Additionally, the use of nudity and sexual situations may be more effective for some products than others. The inappropriate use of sexual appeals in advertising may create negative attitudes toward the brand (Peterson & Hern).

In comparing the perceptions of objectionable advertising among Baby Boomers to that of Generation X, the authors have identified several similarities and differences.

Sexual explicitness: Three of the four factors (Thirtysomethings, Chauvinists and Feminists) objected most to all three advertisements of the Wilke-Rodriguez campaign which graphical portrayed sexual encounters.

Degradation of women: Two of the factors (Thirtysomethings and Feminists) made it clear that the days of advertising which demeans women should be something of the past, as they strongly objected to the Adam's Boots campaign which depicted women in submissive positions.

Political and social issues: The Fortysomethings and Chauvinists strongly objected to advertising dealing with political and social issues; consequently these two groups did not agree with how Benetton dealt with AIDS or the electric hair. They also objected to the Banana Republic advertising which included two homosexual men.

The Thirtysomethings was more similar to the two factors found among members of Generation X than it was to the Fortysomethings. They tended to rank the most sexually explicit and suggestive advertisements as the most objectionable.

The Fortysomethings objected most strongly to advertisements which featured political and social issues such as the death penalty, AIDS, homosexuality (Benetton, Cafe Tabac, Banana Republic). Perhaps, these older Boomers are reflecting some of

the social issues of their youth during the 1960s.

In personal interviews, the Boomers explained the reasons for their Q-sorts in similar terms as Generation X. They objected to the frequency and overt use of sexual explicitness in advertising. Boomers, as Xers, object to the indiscriminate use of sexual appeals which have little, or nothing, to do with the product being advertised. They strongly object to some advertisers' use of political and social issues merely to shock people in order to gain attention.

Both Baby Boomers and Generation X are more tolerant of advertising which tastefully presents sexual appeals that are clearly related to the brand being advertised (e.g. Obsession). Both generations found cigarette and condom advertising the least objectionable.

The authors believe there is room for further research comparing these two generations and there are significant ramifications for marketers and the media as the political and economic clout shifts to Generation X.

NOTES

1 Dunn, W. (1993). The Baby Bust: A Generation comes of Age. American Demographic Books. Ithaca, New York (p. 11).

2 Ibid

3-5 Advertising Age."The media wakes up to Generation X." February 1, 1993, pp. 16 - 17.

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8 Advertising Age. "Protest comes between media and their Calvins." November 24, 1980, 51 p 65.

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22 Stephenson, W. (1953). The Study of Behavior. Chicago : University of Chicago Press.

[23] Brown, S. R., (1980). Political subjectivity : Applications of Q-methodology in political science. New Haven : Yale University Press. (p. 175).

[24] QMETHOD was written by John R. Atkinson, director of Academic Computer Services, Kent State University. Kent, Ohio. The program is available for CMS or VAX installations, and can be obtained on disk or by e-mail.

[25] Brown, S. R., (1980). Political subjectivity : Applications of Q-methodology in political science. New Haven : Yale University Press. (p. 222).

[26] Ibid., p. 246.

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APPENDIX A

Ad descriptions, typal Z-scores and differences for two factors

		Item descriptions	GENERATION X Type 1	Type 2	Diff.	BABY BOOMERS Type 1	Type 2	Diff
		Ns for each type are:	15	14		11	16	
1	Yes Clothing Co	Man, hand underneath woman's exposed breast putting cherry in her mouth	-0.878	-0.037	-0.841	0.315	-0.823	1.138
2	Whooz Blooz Jeans	Two high school kids in front of wall, his hand on her rear	-0.708	0.082	-0.790	0.567	-0.198	0.765
3	Calvin Klein (Escape)	Couple in bathing costumes on top of each other on beach, necking	-0.983	-1.039	0.056	-1.021	-0.952	-0.069
4	Calvin Klein (Obsession)	Naked male torso	0.052	-0.490	0.542	-0.942	-0.391	-0.552
5	Do	Naked woman draped over naked man's shoulder	0.690	0.141	0.549	0.314	0.586	-0.272
6	Do	Naked man and woman on swing	0.928	0.333	0.595	0.055	0.353	-0.298
7	Calvin Klein (underwear)	Marky Mark grabbing crotch	0.756	0.518	0.238	1.887	0.541	1.346
8	Do	Marky Mark and woman model, naked torsos	-0.009	0.512	-0.521	0.379	-0.561	0.940
9	Calvin Klein Jeans	Faceless bodies, female removing belt from male's undone jeans	-0.191	0.384	-0.576	0.687	-0.224	0.911
10	Do	Double page. LHS topless model, breast exposed; RHS model, shirt on	0.110	0.675	-0.565	0.050	-0.450	0.500

11	Guess Jeans	Close up of well-endowed woman whose cleavage is showing	-0.685	0.048	-0.733	-0.120	-0.960	0.839
12	Do	Do	-0.357	0.309	-0.667	0.114	-0.940	1.054
13	Request Jeans	Woman sitting on bed undressing, jeans half way off	0.067	0.472	-0.405	0.785	0.038	0.747
14	Wilke-Rodriguez	Man with face in woman's crotch, breast partly exposed	1.845	2.341	0.496	1.990	1.299	0.691
15	Request Jeans	Couple necking on bed	0.267	0.287	-0.020	0.410	0.128	0.282
16	Wilke-Rodriguez	Couple on roof top simulating intercourse	1.216	1.283	-0.067	1.453	0.987	0.467
17	Adam's Boots	Woman licking shiny floor, breast more exposed than in #18	-0.367	1.147	-1.514	1.390	0.879	0.510
18	Adam's Boots	Woman licking shiny floor	-0.493	1.076	-1.569	1.130	0.892	0.238
19	Benetton	Electric chair	1.332	-0.638	1.970	-0.743	1.497	-2.240
20	Request Jeans	Model on fence, legs spread, breasts partly exposed	-0.851	-0.478	-0.373	-0.188	-0.659	0.471
21	Wilke-Rodriguez	Couple on roof top in heavy necking situation	1.175	1.726	-0.551	1.347	0.989	0.358
22	Request Jeans	Man who has just finished urinating	0.319	-0.835	1.154	0.529	-0.652	1.181
23	Gap	Female model grabbing crotch	-0.999	-1.317	0.318	-0.797	-1.013	0.215
24	Benetton	Family gathered around death bed of AIDS patient resembling Christ figure	1.832	-0.513	2.345	-0.324	1.660	-1.985
25	Do	Albino in foreground against African tribe in background	0.824	0.064	0.760	-0.774	0.926	-1.700

26	Do	Burning car	0.635	-1.227	1.862	-0.666	0.503	-1.169
27	Cafe Luxembourg	Naked, overweight women photographed from behind	0.479	0.461	0.017	0.079	0.517	-0.437
28	Camel Lights	Joe Camel	-2.069	-1.668	-0.401	-1.054	-1.756	0.702
29	Kool Cigarettes	Clothed model, standing with legs apart	-2.191	-1.223	-0.968	-1.309	-1.990	0.680
30	Banana Republic	Two men with hands around each other's neck and chest	0.704	0.067	0.637	-1.305	1.398	-2.702
31	Cafe Tabac	Two women kissing passionately	0.772	1.558	-0.786	0.109	1.694	-1.585
32	Trojan Condoms	Male model surfing	-1.345	-1.937	0.591	-1.884	-1.493	-0.391
33	Integrated Conditioning Programs	Muscular man holding well-built woman	-1.412	0.110	-1.523	0.445	-1.109	1.554
34	Gyne-Moistrin	Classic painting of nude model painted from behind	-0.496	-1.594	1.098	-1.834	-0.256	-1.579
35	K-Y Jelly	Silhouette of naked woman	0.034	-0.599	0.633	-1.073	-0.460	-0.613